WEAPONS SAFETY: A BAD DAY AT THE RANGE

KNOWLEDGE

VOL 5 JANUARY 2011

OFFICIAL SAFETY MAGAZINE OF THE U.S. ARMY

HOW DID OUR ARMY DO?

- ZONED OUT
- SURVIVING BLACK ICE
- BACK TO BASICS

+



YOU'VE GOT IT, RIGHT?

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BAND OF BROTHERS & SISTERS





Leaders:

Thanks to the leadership of our Army Soldiers, Families and Civilians, FY10 was a record year for lowering the number of accidents in our Army. During the past 30 years, we have transformed a force that lost an average of 415 Soldiers annually to accidents into one of the safest institutions in the world, losing 180 Soldiers in FY10, which is one of our lowest rates on record.

During the first years of our wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, our accidental fatality totals and rates steadily increased. However, from FY06 through FY10, Army leaders dramatically reduced accidental fatalities. This was due—in large part—to direct leader engagement, coupled with aggressive application of composite risk management. Leaders, Soldiers and Families taking care of each other, both on and off-duty, were also key contributors to this improvement.

Last year, nearly 72 percent of accidental deaths occurred off-duty, which presents a real challenge for our leaders. Risky behavior and indiscipline (especially involving privately owned vehicles and motorcycle) are cited as contributing factors in the overwhelming majority of these cases. And many were lost because of a failure to wear a seat belt or helmet when operating a vehicle, drinking and driving, or speeding.

This year, we ask each of you—as leaders—to make a renewed commitment to the safety for your Soldiers. Soldier safety is vital to maintaining our combat edge, restoring balance and sustaining the health of our force. Nine years of sustained war have demonstrated that no Soldier fights alone. Like combat, safety is also a team effort that requires everyone be engaged 24 hours a day/7 days a week. With your support, we are confident that 2011 will be another banner year for our force. Thank you for your continued commitment to keeping our Army both safe and strong!

Kenneth O. Preston
Sergeant Major of the Army

George W. Casey, Jr.
General, United States Army
Chief of Staff

John M. McHugh
Secretary of the Army

KNOWLEDGE

OFFICIAL SAFETY MAGAZINE OF THE U.S. ARMY

LEADERS SOLDIERS CIVILIANS FAMILIES

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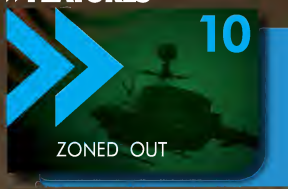
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U.S. ARMY COMBAT READINESS/SAFETY CENTER

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Mission statement: The United States Army Combat Readiness/Safety Center (USACR/Safety Center) supports our Army by collecting, analyzing and communicating actionable information to assist Leaders, Soldiers, Families and Civilians in preserving/protecting our Army's combat resources.

We welcome your feedback. Please e-mail comments to **safe.knowledge@conus.army.mil**.

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ARMY SAFE FOR THE NEW

The start of a new year is always exciting. The months ahead are a blank slate for new beginnings and resolutions to do better in the things most important to daily life. But before we go "out with the old," it's important to reflect on where we've been — and for our Army, 2010 was a year to remember. The closure of combat operations in Iraq was a remarkable milestone for our force and a highly visible indication of the abiding hard work and dedication of our Soldiers, Families and Civilians. So too was the near-record safety performance we sustained throughout the fiscal year, culminating in an historic five-year reduction in on-duty fatalities.

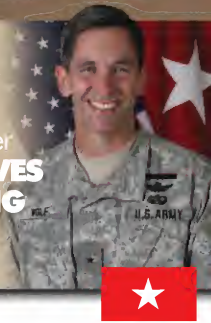
The lead article in this month's Knowledge focuses exclusively on the specifics of our fiscal 2010 safety performance, but the big picture looks like this: Overall, fatalities were up slightly from fiscal 2009; however, our fatality rate per thousand Soldiers remained on par with the historic low achieved during the previous year. This accomplishment was due in large part to a 65 percent reduction in Army motor vehicle fatalities and a drop in deaths attributed to sedans and other privately owned vehicles, including SUVs and trucks. Sharp rises in off-duty motorcycle and pedestrian deaths, however, in addition to a spike in Army combat vehicle and aviation fatalities, resulted in seven additional Soldiers lost during 2010 than in 2009.

Our challenge for 2011 is applying the same principles that have worked both on and off duty, such as an emphasis on restraint system and seat belt use in AMVs and POVs, to our existing problem areas. Pre-combat checks and inspections are a great way for Leaders to engage with their Soldiers on the importance of restraint systems, safe driving habits and proper training both inside and outside the wire. Off duty, Leader, Soldier and Family engagement is crucial to countering the recurring problem of indiscipline, especially with regard to sedan, motorcycle and pedestrian fatalities. Active participation by all three groups is required for maximum effect, and that means Leaders must take the initiative by involving all their Soldiers and Family members in the unit's safety programs.



While Leader engagement has become a hot topic





> Make safety a **PRIORITY** on your resolutions list, and **ALWAYS** remember the **PRECIOUS LIVES** of those **COUNTING ON YOU.**

YEAR

in Soldier safety during the past couple of years, we can't forget about the foundation of every successful safety program: composite risk management. A vital part of engagement is ensuring all Soldiers, regardless of rank or position, are equipped with the tools and knowledge to keep them safe. The best start any Leader can give their Soldiers is an in-depth education in CRM because, once learned, it's much more than a process — rather, it's a mindset and lifestyle that becomes second nature in all activities. As we embark on the new year, take a hard look at your unit to see if your Soldiers really understand the CRM process and conduct refresher training when necessary. The time and effort spent will reap exponential rewards for Soldier well-being and mission readiness.

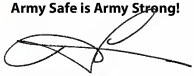
Although 2011 has officially just begun, we got a great start to the new fiscal year with below-average fatalities throughout much of the first quarter. Ultimately, however, we must remember that every number in our fatality count represents another Soldier tragically lost to his or her unit, Family and our Army. By working together, I am confident we can maintain the positive momentum of the past few years and achieve another record year for Soldier safety. Our Band of Brothers and Sisters have demonstrated time and again their courage and sacrifice, and they deserve no less than our full focus, attention and concern, both on and off duty.

The USACR/Safety Center stands ready to help as you renew your commitment to safety during the new year. We have several initiatives planned for 2011, and you can find all our products and tools online at https://safety.army.mil. Please let us know what you think and how we can better meet your needs in the months ahead.

Thank you for what you do every day for our Soldiers, Families and Civilians. Make safety a priority on your resolutions list, and always remember the precious lives of those counting on you. On behalf of the USACR/Safety Center team, I wish each of you and your Families a happy, healthy and safe 2011!«



Army Safe is Army Strong!



WILLIAM T. WOLF
Brigadier General, USA
Director of Army Safety

a BAD DAY at the RANGE

CHIEF WARRANT OFFICER 3 JOSEPH HENRY
Joint Readiness Training Center Operations Group, Aviation Task Force
Fort Polk, La.

Rarely do you hear about incidents at private or public ranges involving members of the military. However, Soldiers can still be involved in accidents at these ranges — even when they believe they've followed the proper safety procedures.







One afternoon while on leave back in my hometown, a friend of mine and I decided to take our privately owned rifles and pistols to our local range. The range was a members-only facility with separate pistol and rifle shooting areas. The two ranges ran parallel to each other and were separated by a 15-foot berm that ran the length of them.

When we arrived that afternoon, there was no one else at the range. We parked at the pistol range area, set up our targets and began shooting. After finishing at the pistol range, we packed our pistols into my truck, grabbed our rifles and walked the 50 yards to the rifle range.

My friend wanted to set up a target at the farthest point away from the shooting benches, which was 300 yards away. We walked down the range, posted our targets at several distances, including 300 yards, and made our way back to the shooting benches. While we were shooting our rifles, another shooter parked at the pistol area and began practicing with his pistol. Little did we know this man would turn out to be a lifesaver.

When we finished with our rifles, we decided to collect our targets. Since the individual was shooting at the pistol range, we took our rifles with us simply for security's sake. We made our way down the range, gathering our targets as we went. Finally, we reached the 300-yard target and began admiring our handy work.

As we turned to walk back to the firing line, we heard ricochets through the trees just over our heads. We looked up to discover that while we were downrange, someone had pulled up to the rifle range, set up his targets at the 25-yard marker and began firing. We quickly sought refuge behind the nearest berm (which happened to be at the 250-yard marker) and began yelling for the shooter to ceasefire. Most of the rounds passed harmlessly overhead, but a few struck the berm we were behind.

After several minutes of waiting and yelling, there finally was a period of silence. The pistol shooter, who had seen us leave to collect our targets on the rifle range, heard our yelling, realized what was going on and ran to stop the rifle shooter. My friend and I made our way back to the shooting area to a very apologetic fellow shooter. We were upset with him, but we also felt a little responsible.



Lessons Learned

Our first mistake was leaving my vehicle at the pistol range. This didn't cue the rifle shooter to our presence on the rifle range. He said he'd scanned the range, but didn't see us, as his sight wasn't the best. Second, with others on the range, even the pistol range, one of us should have stayed back at the shooting benches for safety and security. And lastly, we could have told the pistol shooter we were headed downrange for a while and asked him to notify anyone who arrived of our presence on the range.

Luckily, nobody was injured that day. And while I still go to private and public ranges with family and friends while on leave, this incident is always in the back of my mind. When dealing with firearms, the smallest mistake can lead to a bad day at the range.

THE CARDINAL RULES

NEIL MILES
561st Regional Support Group,
103rd Expeditionary Sustainment Command
Omaha, Neb.

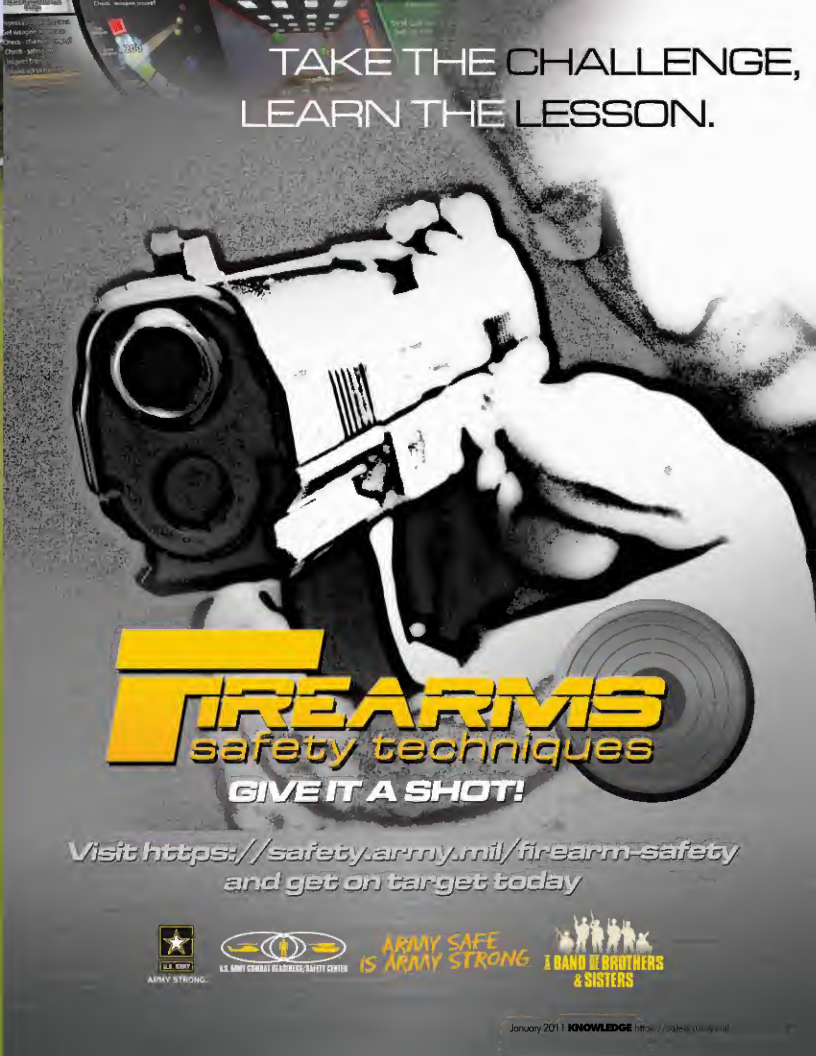
With firearms ownership comes great responsibility. Carelessness can change lives forever.

As a state trooper, I volunteered to teach hunter safety courses for the Nebraska Game and Parks Commission. This involved teaching a 10-hour course to students of all ages, providing as much information as possible about firearm safety. Teaching hunter safety is a big responsibility in which the instructor hopes and prays to make new hunters safe at home and in the field.

Imagine my shock when three months after teaching the class, I saw one of my former students on the evening news. He had been playing with a loaded handgun — pointing it at a friend and laughing — when he inadvertently discharged it. His friend will spend the rest of his life in a wheelchair. I thought about that situation for a long time and how it could have been avoided if he'd just followed the Four Cardinal Rules of Firearm Safety.

1. **All guns are always loaded.** This is the rule that must always be followed when handling a firearm. Even if someone else has cleared the firearm and hands it to you, it is still loaded until you visually and physically inspect it to ensure it is unloaded. If it leaves your control, then it is a loaded gun again. Don't place your future in the hands of someone else.
2. **Keep your finger off the trigger and outside the trigger guard until you are ready to shoot.** This rule is the key to firearm safety. A firearm cannot fire if you keep your finger away from the trigger. It is a must that the finger is placed flat along the receiver of the firearm and remains there. It only leaves that position when you are on your target and have made the decision to fire. This works for all firearms. Once this becomes a habit, it will lead to a much safer future when handling firearms.
3. **Never point at something you aren't willing to destroy.** Muzzle awareness is the key to this rule, as the muzzle is the business end of the firearm. When using a rifle or shotgun, muzzle control is much easier because two hands are in contact. Handguns, with their relatively short barrels, are more prone to being accidentally pointed in the direction of an object or person.
4. **Be sure of your target and beyond.** Know exactly where you're aiming. When in doubt, don't shoot. You must be sure that it is the trophy buck you have been waiting for and not a fellow hunter coming down the trail. When you are sure of the target, the second part of the rule must then be applied. "Is a house or my truck behind the buck?" "Beyond" is that place where an object or person is likely to be struck by your bullet should it miss its intended target. Make sure you know what is in the background before the final pull on the trigger.

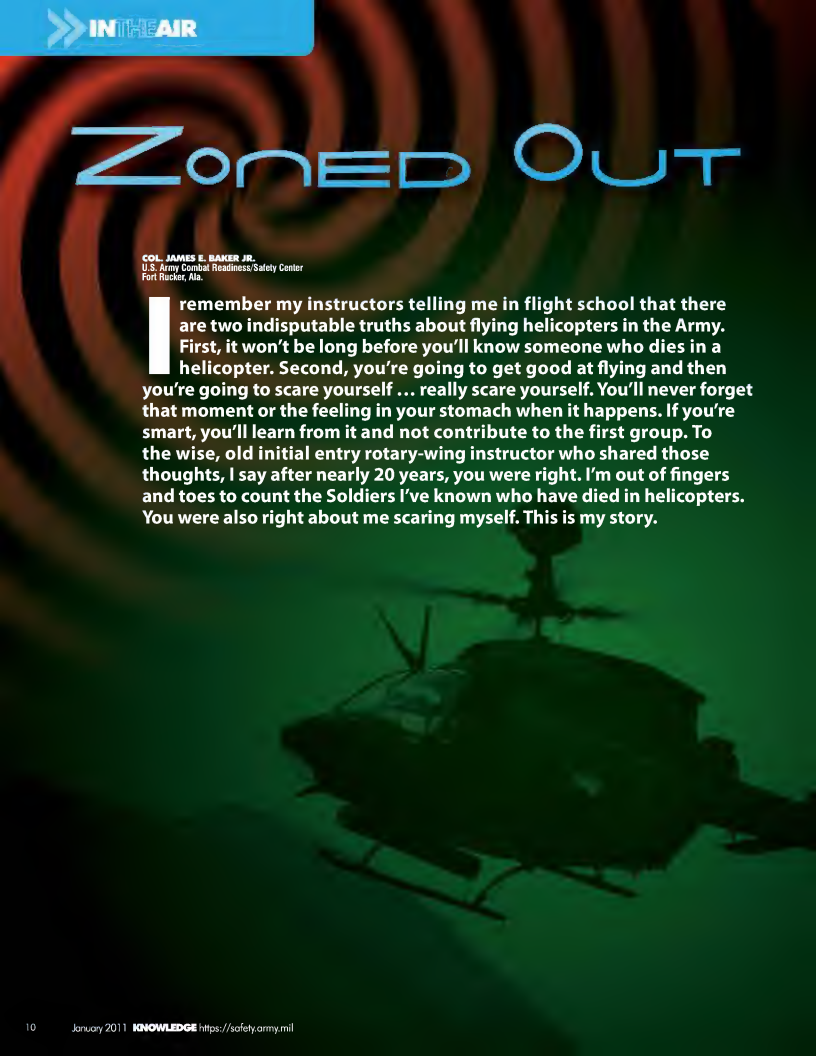
The Four Cardinal Rules of Firearm Safety must become a way of life. They should be committed to memory and passed on to others. Remember, you can never recall a bullet you fired accidentally. However, if you follow the Four Cardinal Rules of Firearm Safety, you won't need to recall your bullet. It went where you intended.


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Zoned Out

COL. JAMES E. BAKER JR.
U.S. Army Combat Readiness/Safety Center
Fort Rucker, Ala.

I remember my instructors telling me in flight school that there are two indisputable truths about flying helicopters in the Army. First, it won't be long before you'll know someone who dies in a helicopter. Second, you're going to get good at flying and then you're going to scare yourself … really scare yourself. You'll never forget that moment or the feeling in your stomach when it happens. If you're smart, you'll learn from it and not contribute to the first group. To the wise, old initial entry rotary-wing instructor who shared those thoughts, I say after nearly 20 years, you were right. I'm out of fingers and toes to count the Soldiers I've known who have died in helicopters. You were also right about me scaring myself. This is my story.



It was the spring of 1997 and I was commanding a scout troop of eight Kiowa Warriors. My unit had deployed to Kingsville Naval Air Station, southwest of Corpus Christi, Texas, for a month in support of Joint Task Force Six. I had been in command for nearly two years and was the pilot in command in the aircraft. I was comfortable with my job and the Soldiers in the unit, and I understood our mission very well.

We had been flying reconnaissance missions in south Texas for nearly two weeks and, by all accounts, things were going well. It has been more than a decade since this incident and experience has taught me that anytime you grow that comfortable, you are at risk. I didn't see it at the time, but complacency almost got the best of me.

On this particular night, we had great weather with cloudless skies and no precipitation forecasted throughout our mission period. It was a standard reconnaissance mission like every other one we had flown since our arrival. We went through our standard routine (plan, file, team brief, preflight, run-up and pre-combat checks) and departed to look at our first few named areas of interest (NAI) just south of the airfield. We "goggled up" before departure and I was lead. Everything went as expected and, after nearly an hour and a half, we returned to the airfield for refuel.

We departed to the southeast for the second half of our mission and had a relatively long route planned with NAIs along the way. Much of the first leg of the route occurred over water along the inlet adjacent to Baffin Bay, Drum Point. With our first NAI nearly 30 minutes away, we talked among ourselves and with the trail aircraft, which was flying well back and 300 feet above me as briefed. I was on the controls and had comfortably settled in after more than two hours in the aircraft.

There's an old adage among professional aviators that flying is simply long periods of boredom punctuated by moments of stark terror. I suspect those words were coined in the context of combat, but I can assure you they are just as relevant anytime you realize you're in a bad situation. I had "zoned out" in the cockpit. I wasn't asleep, far from it, but I wasn't fully engaged in what I was doing. How many times have you been driving a car and realized you hadn't actively seen anything for the past few miles? The countryside had been moving past your windows, but you couldn't describe any of it. You realized it only when you ran over the rumble strips on the side of the road. That's where I was in the cockpit … zoned out.

> "How **MANY TIMES** have you been **DRIVING** a car and **REALIZED** you **HADN'T** actively **SEEN** anything for the past **FEW MILES?**"

In an instant, I saw the water. It didn't register immediately, but when I looked at my radar altimeter, I snapped out of it. It read 13. I was flying 90 knots and had been in a slow descent for quite a while. I was flying with a junior aviator and he never said a word. To this day, I don't know if he even noticed. My trail aircraft was well above me and had less contrast than I did over the water. I don't think either pilot realized how low I had gotten. I casually corrected the condition without making any fuss over it, but, from that moment on, I was a changed man. I realized just how close I had come to splashing an aircraft and killing my co-pilot and myself. Since then, it has never happened again in my aircraft or truck.

For most, the moment of terror comes between the first 500 and 1,000 hours of flight. For many, it's a manifestation of three of our branch chief's "five deadly words": an overconfident, undisciplined and unsupervised pilot willfully disregarding standards by performing unauthorized maneuvers. This unacceptable behavior puts Soldiers and equipment at risk. Disciplined, well-trained aviators die every year without willfully jockeying their aircraft. Why? We're human and complacency is an ever-present and real threat. Understanding complacency and its well-documented causes and, sometimes, catastrophic results is our best means of ensuring we aren't the next victim. It was almost me.«



WHAT'S IN YOUR BLIND SPOT?

SANDY ROBLES
U.S. Army Forces Command
Fort McPherson, Ga.

How NOT to impress the general on your second day at work ...

I was thrilled when I got a call from the civilian personnel office and was offered a job with a promotion in Georgia. As it turned out, the PCS move proved to be more complicated than I thought, but I finally got to Atlanta and checked into a motel on a Saturday night. Sunday, I did a recon run to ensure I knew my route to work and where to park.

Monday came and I arrived as planned, entering the parking garage and selecting a specific spot. I'm one of those people who needs to park in the same place each day — it makes it easier to find my vehicle after work. The butterflies in my stomach were working overtime that day as I met the staff, found my desk and began in-processing. I didn't quite get everything done, but I figured I could finish up Tuesday.

Tuesday morning I climbed into my H3 Hummer and drove to work. As I entered the parking garage, I drove slowly while trying to remember where I'd



parked the previous day. I drove a short distance and then turned left and started going up a ramp. Suddenly, I realized I'd turned too soon and hit the brakes. I looked in my rearview mirror to see if anyone was behind me, but didn't see anything. I took a few moments to look around and then decided to back up and find where I'd parked yesterday.

ELIMINATING "NO-SEE-UM" ZONES

Despite the funny aspects of the story on page 12, blind spots aren't always a laughing matter. All too often, unseen vehicles or pedestrians become casualties when accidents occur in "no-see-um" zones. While some vehicles incorporate television cameras to help improve a driver's view to the rear, most motorists still have to rely heavily on properly adjusted mirrors. Fortunately, there is a proven method for adjusting rearview and side mirrors to eliminate most blind spots. Tom and Ray Magliozzi, hosts of National Public Radio's popular "Car Talk" program, suggest the following tips.

- **Step 1: Start by setting your rearview mirror as you normally would.**
 Then, lean your head all the way to the left so it touches the driver's window. From that position, set your left side-view mirror so you can see the back corner of your car. Now lean the same distance the other way, and set your right side-view mirror the same way.
 Now, here's what happens. When a car comes up behind you, you should first see it in your rearview mirror. But as it passes you (let's say on your left), you'll see it move to the left side of your rearview mirror. And as its left headlight disappears from your rearview mirror, it should instantly show up in your left side-view mirror. There should be no delay. It should slip from one to the other, so you can always see it.
- **Step 2: Left-side mirror alignment.**
 Set your left-side mirror so that as soon as the passing car's left-front headlight disappears from your rearview mirror, it appears in your left-side mirror. You might need to make some slight adjustments to your side-view mirrors to make everything line up perfectly. And pulling up next to a line of parked cars (to simulate another lane of traffic next to you) is a good way to do that.
- **Step 3: Right-side mirror alignment.**
 Then do the same thing on the right.
- **Step 4: End result — no blind spots!**
 Driving with the mirrors this way takes some getting used to. You have to learn to rely on your rearview mirror first. And you'll have to get used to what your side-view mirrors are now looking at. The good news is your blind spots should now be gone!

Because I'd only gone a short distance, I figured backing up would be a piece of cake. I'd barely put the Hummer in reverse and touched the gas when I felt a bump. I stopped and checked the mirrors, but didn't see anything. Putting the transmission in park, I got out to see what had happened. As I walked toward the back of the Hummer, I saw a parked car. I thought, "This is just great!" By that time another car had entered the parking garage, so I hopped back into my Hummer and found a place to park. I decided to write down the license number and ask security if they could tell me whose car it was so I could let them know what happened.

> "I **APOLOGIZED** to the **MAJOR**, but he **SMILED** and said it wasn't his car — **IT WAS** his **BOSS'**..."

I grabbed a pen and paper and headed through the garage toward the car. As I got closer, I could see the flashing lights from a couple of police cruisers. Next to the car, I saw four police officers talking to a major. I walked up and told them I'd backed into the car and was coming to leave a message for its owner. I apologized to the major, but he smiled and said it wasn't his car — it was his boss'. He didn't mention who that was, but when I looked down, I noticed the letters "DCG" (deputy commanding general).

My heart sank to my stomach and I thought I was going to be sick. My second day on the job and I'd backed into the general's car! How unlucky could I be? I thought for sure I'd be fired. It took the police a couple of hours to do their thing. Needless to say, the whole process was painful for me. They called my boss and he came out and stayed with me, reassuring me everything was going to be OK. The incident only cost me $40 — but it cost me a lot more than that in embarrassment.

When I finally headed into the office, everyone came down to find out "what had really happened." After everything settled down, I finished in-processing. I didn't get fired, but it made me realize how important it is to know your vehicle's blind spots. Since this experience, I've been checking the market for a back-up alarm or camera. After all, I don't have the luxury of a ground guide for my Hummer!



ROAD RULES



The Privately Owned Vehicle (POV) Risk Management Toolbox is a tool for commanders, Leaders, supervisors and subordinates to use in their organizations. The toolbox contains best practice examples and lessons learned that can be used as accident prevention measures when developing a unit POV safety program.

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GET THE PICTURE?



NAME WITHHELD BY REQUEST

After serving 20 years in the military, I've found that, in many cases, accidents and mishaps are due to a lack of situational awareness. It nearly cost me my life during my first assignment in the U.S. Army.



I was a combat medic assigned to the 2nd Armored Calvary Regiment and had participated in the Battle of 73 Easting during Desert Storm. I treated and evacuated wounded in a bullet-riddled vehicle and lived through the 100-hour war. Shortly after, my regiment was given marching orders to establish checkpoints and humanitarian aid along the Euphrates River.

Over the next couple of months, we provided medical support to many Iraqi citizens. In every case, I remained cautious of them — feeling they were still a threat. I sometimes wondered, "Does he or she have a weapon or a bomb, just waiting to kill an American Soldier?" I never felt safe unless I was inside



the unit compound or in my trusty M113 armored personnel carrier. Eventually, the peace accord was negotiated and the regiment was given a short timeline to depart Iraq.

Our route out of Iraq was pretty much the reverse of how we entered and involved little rest along the way. This meant we traveled west for a time, then south to Saudi Arabia. Throughout the mission, our first sergeant and commander constantly stressed situational awareness and the importance of the buddy system.

Unlike most convoys, where movement is usually single file, we traveled in tactical formations. Throughout the war, I always positioned the vehicle to the left flank of the other combat vehicles. This provided extra protection since there wasn't much of a weapon system on a medical vehicle besides two M-16s.

Once we made our turn south, our pace picked up to meet our mission timeline. We soon came upon a large assortment of battle-damaged enemy vehicles. As the unit continued its movement, my tactical commander (TC) took pictures of the damaged vehicles while I focused on our position and movement.

At the next rest and refueling, the commander came over the net and said we needed to remain focused because there were still many threats. We continued the tactical march and soon came upon more battle damage. As I drove, my TC once again began taking pictures. Before long, I was doing the same.

Suddenly, there was an explosion that lifted my M113 off the ground and sent a shower of flames over the vehicle. My combat vehicle crewman helmet struck the back and front of the driver's entrance as we came down and rolled to a stop. I saw my TC lying on the floor of the vehicle and called out to see if he was OK. He said he was fine and asked the same of me. I sat there for a few minutes, making sure I wasn't bleeding and still had control of my faculties.

Within seconds of the blast, the first sergeant radioed to check on us and told us not to move. We acknowledged his orders and informed him we were both OK. My TC and I then climbed out of our hatches to assess the situation. While we were busy taking pictures, we had driven into a field of unexploded ordinance. This incident resulted in two damaged road wheels, the driver-side shroud was half blown off and we had four damaged track shoes. Fortunately, our mechanics were able to get us back up in a couple of hours so we could continue our mission.

In the Army, we often hear the saying "Stay alert, stay alive." On this day, my TC and I failed to stay alert and we're lucky to be alive. We both lost situational awareness — something that had kept us safe during the previous five months of our deployment. This incident was a wake-up call. No matter how routine the task, never let your guard down. «

Surviving Black Ice

CHARLES D. BETONEY II
633rd Air Base Wing Safety
Joint Base Langley-Eustis
Fort Eustis, Va.

It's a typical mid-January Monday morning. The weekend ended too soon and the long grind of the work week looms ahead. You start your normal morning routine — making coffee, eating breakfast, taking a shower, dressing and warming up the car. The sun still hasn't peeked over the distant horizon, and the temperature dropped well below freezing last night. Looks like a good time to try out that new winter jacket you got for Christmas.

Thankfully, the winter has been rather mild this year and you haven't had to deal with the hassle of constant snowfall. You're beginning to run late, so you back out of the driveway before your car fully heats up and head down familiar roads to work. Even with the new coat on, the inside of the car is still frigid. You're fumbling with the heater knob when your car suddenly begins skidding and goes into a spin. You've just driven across one of the most perilous and often unseen hazards on winter roads — black ice.

Black ice can be a serious driving hazard when the temperature dips near or below freezing. Black ice forms when snow, water or other types of condensation melt onto the road surface and refreeze. It's called black ice because it is difficult to see and can blend in with the road's color. It is most common on bridges, overpasses and in shaded sections of the road where it can remain frozen after other parts of the road have thawed.

You need to follow certain precautions when driving in winter weather or when there is the potential for black ice to form on the roads. The first precaution is to always wear your seat belt — something you should be doing anyway. Then,



DRIVING SAFELY ON ICY ROADS

Here are some additional winter driving tips to help keep you safe.

- Turn on your lights to increase your visibility to other motorists.
- Make sure your tread is in good condition.
- Keep your headlights and windshield clean.
- Use low gears to keep traction, especially on hills.
- Don't pass snowplows and sanding trucks. These drivers have limited visibility, and you'll likely find the road in front of them worse than the road behind.
- Don't assume your vehicle can handle all conditions. Even four-wheel and front-wheel-drive vehicles can encounter trouble on winter roads.

as you drive, watch out for black patches or what appears to be water on the road, as this could be black ice. Just as when driving in the rain, avoid using your cruise control or overdrive because these can cause wheel spin and send your car out of control. Allow a generous following distance behind the vehicle ahead so you'll have ample room to stop or maneuver if you hit ice or need to react quickly. Accelerate slowly to maintain traction and never slam on the brakes, which can cause a skid. If you notice a possible trouble spot ahead, shift into a lower gear to reduce your speed and give you more control of your vehicle.

Should these precautions fail and you find yourself beginning to skid, here are a few driving techniques to help you regain control. If you feel your vehicle beginning to skid, quickly take your foot off the gas, as accelerating only increases your chances of spinning. Also, don't slam on the brakes. Hitting your brakes will send you skidding out of control. If you have a stick shift, push in the clutch or put the transmission in neutral and allow the vehicle's momentum to carry you straight across the ice. In the event that the car begins to skid, turn the steering wheel in the direction of the skid to get the vehicle back on track.

Using these techniques can mean the difference between driving out of a skid and spinning out of control. While winter driving has its risks, being prepared and alert can keep you on the road and out of an accident.«





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Know Wh

CHIEF WARRANT OFFICER 4 ROBERT C. DEPARTEE
B Company, 2/160th Special Operations Aviation Regiment
Fort Campbell, Ky.

Do you remember Gary Larson's "The Far Side" comic strip where two pilots are flying in an airplane when one of them asks the other, "Say, what's a mountain goat doing way up here in a cloud bank?" I'm sure a lot of pilots got a chuckle out of that. However, inside, we were probably thinking how messed up they were for getting into that situation.



I remember the undertone when I was going through the Scout track during flight school seemed to be "whatever you do, stay away from the clouds." On more than one occasion, I heard the quote, "All clouds have rocks." Of course, at the time, I was flying OH-58A/Cs, a non-instrument-rated aircraft.

Fast forward a few years to when I was a pilot (PI) flying a UH-1H on a parts run from Salinas, Kan., to somewhere in Missouri when we ran into some unforecasted bad weather. Rather than turn around or commit to an instrument flight, the senior pilot in command (PC) instructed me to fly the instruments while he attempted to maintain visual contact with the ground. By this point in my career, I'd logged about 300 PC hours in Scouts where I had held the belief that all clouds have rocks. Nevertheless, I wasn't about to suggest instrument flight rules (IFR) even though the UH-1H was an instrument-rated aircraft. Obviously, we survived. However, the impression of "stay out of the clouds no matter what" was still there.

Fast forward again to when I was the PC in a CH-47 returning to the Pendleton, Ore., airport from a night unaided training flight to the Tri-Cities, Wash., area. The weather forecast had called for clear weather with maybe some high clouds. However, as I contacted the tower for landing, they advised me that the field was IFR. After requesting special visual flight rules (VFR), I was instructed to remain outside of the airspace due to a commercial flight inbound on the instrument landing system.

I turned my junior PI to the west to skirt the airspace. We were flying along at 100 KIAS and 700 feet above ground level when our landing light illuminated some low-flying clouds scudding across the sky. I'll admit that it initially looked like a



en to Go

brick wall coming at us. But then I realized you could see through the clouds to the city lights on the horizon beyond. In that split second, my PI executed an abrupt turn to the left and dove toward the ground. After I recovered the aircraft, which was quite a bit closer to the ground, and had a "discussion" with him about his actions, he remained convinced he had taken the correct action and saved the aircraft. Obviously, I wasn't the only one to come out of flight school with the impression of "all clouds have rocks."

Well, then it happened to me. I was returning to Pendleton from a night vision goggle training flight to Fort Lewis, Wash., when we encountered unforecasted bad weather in the mountains southeast of post. This time I had no choice but to go instrument meteorological conditions (IMC) inadvertently. I survived the initial shock, leveled the aircraft and started the climb. My technique was not perfect by any means. Luckily, my co-pilot was an experienced airline pilot. He maintained his composure better than I did. When I told him to contact air traffic control (ATC) and declare an emergency, his calm response was, "They know what just happened. A declared emergency is not necessary."

Sure enough, after we maintained control of the aircraft, we established contact with ATC. They were expecting our call. Remember, in a radar environment, ATC watches a 1200 code getting slower and lower. They have a good idea about weather conditions. Then all of a sudden, that same 1200 code is climbing like a rocket. ATC had steered IFR traffic away from us before we even made the call. That's not to say an emergency call is not appropriate. It just may or may not be necessary depending on the circumstances. Anyway, we made it to Pendleton IFR without incident. That's when I started to have my own attitude shift toward IFR.

So, what's my point to all this? Whether intentional or not, pilots are still coming out of flight school with a reluctance to commit to IFR. Army aviators, as a whole, seem to maintain the attitude that all clouds have rocks. We continue to see accident reports where someone tried to fly VFR in IMC and impacted either the ground or an obstacle. I'm not advocating the use of IIMC as a primary contingency course of action. However, unforecasted IMC does happen. I remember reading an article in Approach magazine (the Navy and Marine Corps aviation safety magazine) about ejection. Their recommendation was, "Know when it's time to go. And then go." The same can be said about IFR. If you encounter IMC/IIMC, know when it's time to go IFR and then go. Don't hesitate. Don't think twice about it. Go! ATC is not going to jump on you. Your commander shouldn't jump on you. Even if he or she does, at least you and your crew are there to take the butt chewing. Butt chewings aren't so bad. They beat the alternative.«

How Ou

Fiscal

The history books will show 2010 was a significant year for our Army in many respects: the closure of combat operations in Iraq, renewed focus on stabilizing Afghanistan and, in regard to safety, another year of near-record lows in fatal accidents.

Looking back at the past decade, this accomplishment is more remarkable when considering the steady rise in accidental fatalities we experienced every year from the Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist attacks to fiscal 2005, when 299 Soldiers were lost to accidents. The turnaround since fiscal 2005 has been amazing, leading us to where we stand today with the lowest accident rates ever recorded in our Army's statistical history. The commitment of our Leaders, Soldiers, Families and Civilians to the mission and safety is clear, even as we begin the next chapter of combat operations overseas.

The numbers of accidental fatalities for fiscal 2010 offer proof of our Army's steady improvement in the fight against accidental loss. Total Class A accidents were down 6 percent from 2009 numbers, an achievement that helped sustain an unprecedented five-year reduction in on-duty fatalities. Every success is met with some challenges, however, and in 2010 we lost seven more Soldiers to accidents than in 2009 (180 deaths versus 173). This number is by no means insignificant — rather, every Soldier, regardless of rank or position within the unit, is a vital and irreplaceable part of the team and their Families. By taking a look at where we were in 2010, we can develop a sound game plan for preventing similar tragedies in 2011.

On Duty

Overall, on-duty losses were down 2 percent for the year, attributed in large measure to a 65 percent decline in Army motor vehicle (AMV) fatalities from 2009. Yet, a nearly equal increase in Army combat vehicle (ACV) deaths, in addition to a 33 percent rise in aviation-related deaths, threatened to spoil the gains made in AMV safety. Fortunately, the positive five-year downward trend in on-duty fatalities was not disrupted, and we can improve our performance in the year ahead by applying the same principles that have worked so well in AMVs to ACV operations, specifically those involving the Mine Resistant Ambush Protected (MRAP) vehicle.

There is no doubt the MRAP family of vehicles has saved thousands of lives through its subsequent iterations, but the massive protection

w Did ur Army Do?

2010 End-of-Year Review

U.S. ARMY COMBAT READINESS/SAFETY CENTER
Fort Rucker, Ala.

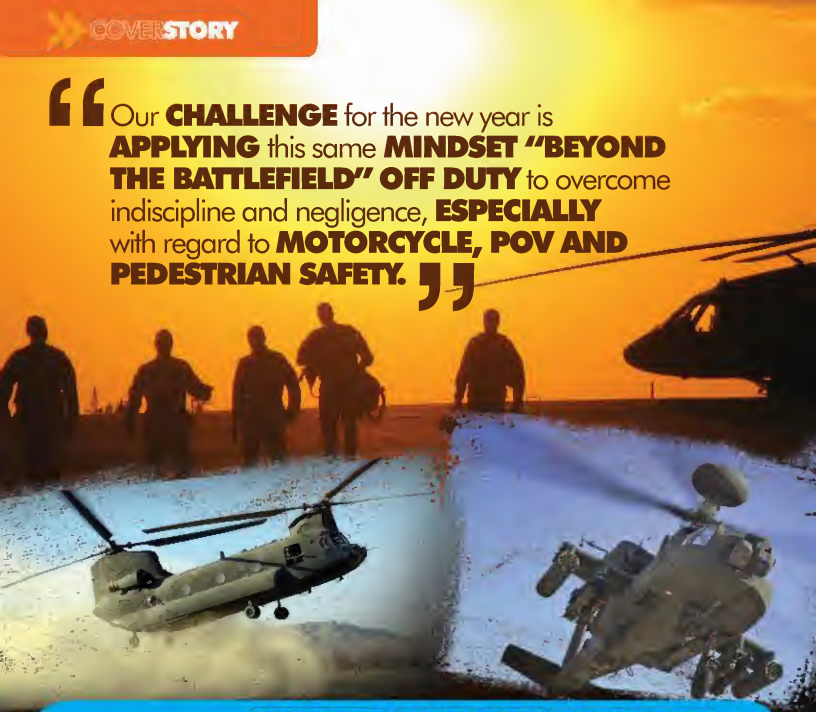


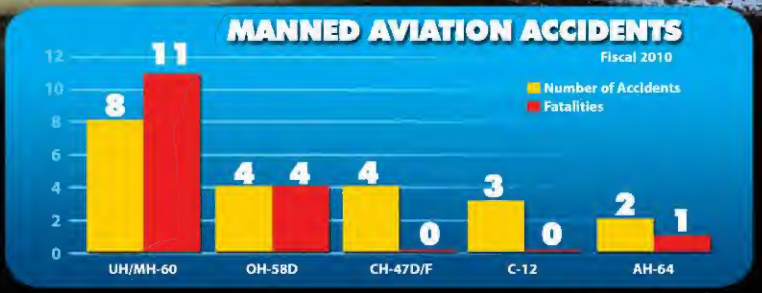


these vehicles afford is also what makes them so unsafe when crews neglect to wear restraint systems or disregard other standards. We saw similar problems when the up-armored HMMWV was introduced to the field during Operation Iraqi Freedom, but aggressive training and a renewed emphasis on Leader engagement in pre-combat checks and inspections have helped counter the hazards of these equally important vehicles. For several years, a vital tool in ensuring the safety of up-armored HMMWV crews has been the HMMWV Egress Assistance Trainer, a device that provides crews with realistic scenarios during rollover drill training. The MRAP community can now benefit from a similar initiative, the MRAP Egress Trainer (MET), at certain installations in theater and within CONUS. These trainers offer the toughest and most realistic training available outside actual combat operations and also provide Leaders a prime opportunity to engage with their crews on the importance of restraint systems and proper mission planning.

In addition to the MET, several other MRAP-centric tools were released to the field during fiscal 2010 and early fiscal 2011. In January 2011, the Army Maneuver Center of Excellence will publish Training Circular (TC) 7-31, MRAP Family of Vehicles Driver Training, for Leaders and trainers in the field. This manual is a welcome addition to driver training kits and fills a void that has existed almost since the MRAP's inception. Complementing TC 7-31 is the U.S. Army Combat Readiness/Safety Center's MRAP Safety Awareness toolkit, available now online at https://safety.army.mil. The kit includes a training support package, safety presentation with speaker notes, graphic

"Our **CHALLENGE** for the new year is **APPLYING** this same **MINDSET "BEYOND THE BATTLEFIELD" OFF DUTY** to overcome indiscipline and negligence, **ESPECIALLY** with regard to **MOTORCYCLE, POV AND PEDESTRIAN SAFETY.**"





as of 1 November 2010



training aid, equipment stowage guide and informational videos highlighting a variety of MRAP safety issues. However, training guides and videos are merely tools, so Leaders must continually reinforce the importance of rollover drills, restraint system use and adherence to standards on every mission, for these are the only proven methods for both surviving and reducing MRAP accidents.

When compared to safety performance on the ground, fiscal 2010 was a tough year for the Army aviation community. Total Class A aviation accidents were down 7 percent from 2009, but fatalities remained above the previous year's numbers through the end of fiscal 2010. Tragically, we closed the year with a UH-60 accident in Afghanistan that killed five Soldiers and four additional service members. This incident and our other fatal aviation accidents highlight several prominent training concerns, including operations in environments with degraded visibility and issues with power management, crew coordination and mission planning. To keep our aviation numbers from creeping higher, aviation Leaders must heighten their emphasis on tough, realistic training and ensure all their Leaders, especially those inside the cockpit, are committed to the safety of their crews, passengers and aircraft.

During the past several years, the Army has increased its investment in high-altitude and environmental training facilities, including the High Altitude Mountain Environmental Training (HAMET) and High Altitude Army Training Site (HAATS). Training through these two programs closely replicates conditions in theater and provides an excellent opportunity for pilots and crews to familiarize themselves with safe operations in adverse environments. Leaders must also take advantage of the Army's Aircrew Coordination Training-Enhanced program, which prepares crews to work together and communicate clearly in every situation. This is more than an annual requirement and should be an on-going training tool. They should also stay focused on emerging aviation trends to prevent similar accidents from occurring within their own formations.

As important as manned aircraft are to our Army's missions, we cannot forget the contributions of small unmanned aircraft systems (SUAS) to our operations overseas. While SUAS accidents might not seem as urgent as manned incidents with fatalities, the fact is these systems are vital combat multipliers that can cost millions of dollars, qualifying as Class A Army losses. Leaders must ensure their units have up-to-date reporting systems in place and a safety officer designated for reporting duties when mishaps occur. Only by sharing this data can we report lessons learned and keep our fleet of SUAS available to commanders and Soldiers.

Off Duty

Overall, we ended the year slightly above fiscal 2009 in regard to off-duty accidental fatalities, with increases in motorcycle, sports and pedestrian deaths. On the flip side, sedan fatalities fell slightly,

but our largest decreases were in the "other" privately owned vehicle category (trucks, SUVs, vans, mopeds and all-terrain vehicles), where the total dropped by more than 25 percent for the year, and personnel injury-other deaths, which saw a 27 percent reduction. Unfortunately, a 22 percent increase in motorcycle fatalities compounded the rise in pedestrian deaths and, with all categories added together, a total of eight additional Soldiers were lost off duty than in 2009.

Not surprisingly, indiscipline — speed, lack of seat belts or personal protective equipment, alcohol or drug use and sometimes all three — were cited as primary contributing factors in the overwhelming majority of our fiscal 2010 off-duty fatalities. While Soldiers are ultimately responsible for their actions, Leaders and Families play a critical role in helping them make smart decisions about their off-duty activities. Off-duty safety can be the most difficult of all areas for Leaders to address and enforce, but engagement remains one of the most valuable safety tools available.

Numerous programs exist to help Soldiers stay safe on their motorcycles, including local Motorcycle Mentorship Programs, scenario-based simulators and the progressive training model, which incorporates four Motorcycle Safety Foundation courses to improve and sustain rider skill sets on a continuous basis. These initiatives and others like POV trainers offer commanders and Leaders a great opportunity to make a positive impact on their Soldiers and engage with them in all aspects of motorcycle and driving safety.

Other tools are available to assist Leaders in keeping their Soldiers safe off duty. Although weapons fatalities as a whole were down during fiscal 2010, weapons safety remains a top concern, especially regarding negligent discharges with privately owned weapons. These incidents are often attributed to lack of knowledge or experience with the particular weapon involved, a risk that is multiplied exponentially



OFF-DUTY FATALITIES

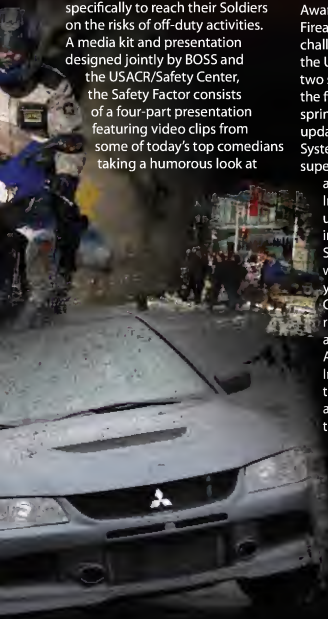
Fiscal 2010 vs Fiscal 2009

Vehicle/Activity	Fiscal 2010	Fiscal 2009	Increase/Decrease
Motorcycle	39	32	+7
Sedan	39	41	-2
Other POV	24	31	-7
Pedestrian	12	5	+7
Sports	8	4	+4
Personnel injury-Other	7	8	-1

as of 1 November 2010

by alcohol use. Late in the year, the USACR/Safety Center released the interactive Firearms Safety Techniques website to raise awareness of the dangers of private weapons. The site offers several challenges where Soldiers and Family members can test their weapons skills and experience in a variety of conditions and learn what right looks like.

The recently updated Better Opportunities for Single Soldiers (BOSS) Safety Factor is another tool designed for Leaders and NCOs specifically to reach their Soldiers on the risks of off-duty activities. A media kit and presentation designed jointly by BOSS and the USACR/Safety Center, the Safety Factor consists of a four-part presentation featuring video clips from some of today's top comedians taking a humorous look at the hazards of Army life. The idea is to engage and disarm Soldiers with laughs while reinforcing a positive safety message applicable to all off-duty activities. Parts one and two of the presentation are available online now via the USACR/Safety Center and BOSS websites, with additional modules to be released at the beginning of each quarter through fiscal 2011.



Fiscal 2010 Safety Initiatives

In addition to the MRAP Safety Awareness training package, Firearms Safety Techniques challenge and BOSS Safety Factor, the USACR/Safety Center released two seasonal campaigns during the fiscal year, one each for spring/summer and fall/winter; updated the Travel Risk Planning System with a "comments" field for supervisor and subordinate input; and gave the Risk Management Information System a complete upgrade with new and improved search functionality. Safety professionalization was a top priority for the year as well, with the Army's Civilian Career Program-12 receiving recognition and accreditation from the American National Standards Institute and recognition from the Department of Defense as the service leader in safety training. Active and Reserve Component ground safety officers received official recognition as well with the 6Q skill identifier, a step that will help ensure our ground units are staffed with highly trained uniformed safety personnel. Several other initiatives are planned for 2011, so stay tuned to the USACR/Safety Center website and our social media sites for the latest safety information.

Conclusion

Our Army's safety performance in fiscal 2010 proved our Leaders, Soldiers, Family members and Civilians are achieving remarkable things by working together and staying engaged. The five-year decline in fatal on-duty accidents, even in the midst of a near-record OPTEMPO and continuous rotations to and from theater, is a significant accomplishment that highlights the power of Leader and Soldier engagement. Our challenge for the new year is applying this same mindset "beyond the battlefield" off duty to overcome indiscipline and negligence, especially with regard to motorcycle, POV and pedestrian safety. Training and continuous refinement of the composite risk management process remain critical tools in our fight against preventable accidents, but the keys to driving down all losses are engagement across our total force and Soldiers working together to keep our Band of Brothers and Sisters safe. Wherever you are and whatever the mission, always remember Army Safe is Army Strong!

Editor's note: At the time this article was written, information on fiscal 2010 accidental fatalities was still being received by the USACR/ Safety Center. Once that information is entered into the database, the statistics and findings may change.«

JUST A 'SHORT'

CHIEF WARRANT OFFICER 4 BENJAMIN WILLIAMS
U.S. Army Priority Air Transport-Pacific Flight Detachment
Joint Base Pearl Harbor/Hickam Air Force Base, Hawaii

I thought I was about to launch into a giant "black hole" …

The "PCS gods" had smiled upon me and I had orders from Fort Rucker to Korea with a follow-on assignment in Hawaii. "What a deal!" I thought. I'll just drive my Jeep Wrangler to California and have it shipped to Hawaii, where it can be waiting for me. And, to boot, during the drive, I'll stop in Salt Lake City for a few days to visit my daughter.

I'd driven cross-country three times in the past and (thought) I knew my limits. I particularly enjoyed driving at night because there was less traffic. However, in the past there was at least one other person in the vehicle with me. This time I would be going solo.

All went well until I got to Denver. There I'd planned to get off Interstate 70 West and go north on I-25. Ultimately, I intended to go west on I-80 and then take I-84 to Salt Lake City. I was feeling pretty good when I got to Denver and it was still daylight, so I decided to continue on. If I kept my pace, I figured I could make it to Salt Lake City by early evening.

But wouldn't you know it; things didn't quite go as planned. Maybe I was daydreaming, but somehow I missed my turn onto I-25. By the time I caught my mistake, I had already gone 25 miles. As I looked at the map, I figured I'd lose too much time going back and if I continued on I-70 West, I'd be going too far south.

So what could I do? I looked at the map and saw a highway through the mountains that would take me to Salt Lake City. I decided to take it — thinking I might make it to Salt Lake City even sooner than originally planned. Unfortunately, I was way off on that calculation. Just because a highway is on a map doesn't mean it's a major road. The highway went through several towns, and with the resultant stop lights and stop signs, it was much slower going than on the interstate. By the time I got to the Colorado-Utah border, the sun had gone down and it was already past my original arrival time. At least the highway had transitioned to four lanes with a faster speed limit. I finally made it to the Utah side and was driving down a mountain. I figured everything was still going to work out and that I'd get to visit with my daughter that night. That is, until it started to snow.

My headlights were little help. They only illuminated the area about 50 feet in front of me and using my high beams didn't help (as you would expect, that's why you're advised not to use your high beams when it's snowing or raining). To mitigate my risks, I slowed to 35 mph. However, now I was losing time and, since no one else was on the road, I decided to speed up a little. As I pushed down on the gas pedal, I lost control and the Jeep began sliding. I spun 1½ times and wound up facing the wrong direction. Good thing no one else was on the road.

After I got myself together, I turned around and started driving again. As before, I started out slowly and, as my confidence increased, so did my speed. After all, I was in a four-wheel-drive vehicle. I thought that would keep me out of trouble. All was going well until I increased to about 35 mph and started spinning again — only this time it was worse than before. As I tried to regain control, I glanced to the right and saw it was pitch black and there weren't any guardrails. Apparently, there was a drop off on the right side of the road and I was heading toward it. I figured I was about to launch into a giant "black hole" when, suddenly, there was a jolt and loud "thud."

Thankfully, the Jeep stopped. I'd struck a cement barrier on the highway's shoulder — the last impediment before I would've launched into the "wild dark yonder." Once my heart began beating again, I got out to assess the situation and the damage to my Jeep. I'd hit the first barrier only about two feet from where it began. How lucky was that! If not for the barrier, I'd have gone down a very steep slope. The Jeep would've probably rolled and everything inside bounced



around and knocked me unconscious. Who knows how long it would have been before someone found me.

The damage to my Jeep was limited to having the left-rear tube bumper bent in about 4 inches. This event could've ended up much worse; but the truth is this didn't even have had to happen in the first place.

Fortunately, I survived and gained some useful lessons learned. First, I should've stayed on the interstates as planned. Even though the distance may be farther than traveling on an interstate, the higher speed limits and lack of cross traffic, stop signs and signals make them safer and often quicker. Second, check the weather before you head out and have some emergency supplies in your vehicle just in case you get stranded. Third, check how your vehicle handles in the snow. Understand that just because you have a four-wheel-drive vehicle doesn't mean you'll always be able to maintain traction on slippery roads. Fourth, let someone know your route and inform them of any changes you make along the way. And finally — as I learned the hard way — don't be in a rush and drive fatigued. You might end up missing your destination — permanently.«

Editor's note: At the time the author took his trip, the Army had not yet developed aids such as the Travel Risk Planning System (TRiPS) program, available online at https://safety.army.mil/, to help Soldiers stay safe on the road. Also, despite many popular misconceptions, four-wheel-drive vehicles are not impervious to the snow, and unwary drivers can get into serious trouble. For valuable information on handling snowy driving conditions along with some mind-tugging challenges, visit 4-Wheel Freedom 4x4 Driving Tips online at http://www.4x4road.com/tipssnow.html.

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BACK TO BASICS



1ST LT. ERIK JOHNSON
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U.S. Army Reserve
Chicopee, Mass.

Few events are more regrettable than a Soldier dying because someone was careless. Following basic safety principles and using good, common-sense judgment are essential to maintaining a secure environment in theater and at home. For Army mounted operations, these principles are outlined in numerous ground safety guides.

We must be diligent about safety in and around all Army vehicles, whether they're wheeled or tracked. Leaders must perform a risk assessment before all mounted operations. It's the responsibility of every Leader to manage the risks — including those posed by the enemy — once the risk assessment is complete.

Training, Ground Guides, Seat Belts and PMCS

A good driver's training program is crucial for a successful deployment. All vehicle operators must be licensed and properly trained for their vehicle. Ground guides are another essential element of safe driver practices, as is the use of seat belts in all Army vehicles. All too often we've seen the terrible harm unbelted Soldiers suffer, such as severe neck and abdominal injuries.

Preventive maintenance checks and services (PMCS) must also be performed before any vehicle is used. Mechanically unsafe vehicles, such as those with faulty brakes, errant steering systems or even exhaust problems, should never be driven before all deficiencies are corrected. Drivers should conduct a 360-degree search around their vehicles to detect problems. The 360-degree search also allows drivers to ensure no one is close to or under the vehicle before they move it.

Troop and Cargo Loads

Another consideration is the vehicle's physical dynamics, which change when it's loaded with troops or cargo. Vehicles must not be operated under conditions where passenger or cargo loads exceed their carrying capacity. Every vehicle's –10 includes factory-specified load limits. Vehicle loads should be inspected and secured before departure, and troop and cargo straps must always be used. Soldiers also must not ride on top of cargo. Leaders must brief all drivers, assistant drivers and the



highest-ranking vehicle occupant before each mission. Hazardous areas or conditions must be identified and discussed during this brief, along with safe following distances, proper speed, route of travel, rest periods and signals.

Carbon Monoxide Poisoning

Hazards such as slippery or unimproved roads can result in vehicle rollovers or collisions, but less obvious threats also exist. Carbon monoxide poisoning is a potential danger in vehicle operations. Carbon monoxide is a gas emitted from many sources, including internal combustion engines. It's colorless, odorless, tasteless and deadly. Soldiers have died from carbon monoxide poisoning in a variety of situations.

To counter this threat, Soldiers must not sleep in vehicles with the engines running. Carbon monoxide is heavier than air and concentrates in low-lying areas, so Soldiers should use extreme caution around vehicles parked in depressions. Electric generators in the field should be considered an equal hazard since they also emit high concentrations of carbon monoxide. Symptoms of carbon monoxide poisoning include headache, dizziness, sleepiness and tightness across the forehead. Seek medical attention immediately for any Soldiers exhibiting these symptoms, and move them to fresh air as quickly as possible.

Noise Dissociation

Noise dissociation occurs when Soldiers hear the noise of vehicles or equipment but fail to observe the direction of the noise. In effect, noises are heard but subconsciously silenced. Soldiers are more likely to be run over if they're suffering from this "masking effect" when noise doesn't trigger an alarm to get out of the way.

Soldiers must always find the source of any new sound. If all Soldiers practice this, ground safety will be enhanced greatly. Additionally, Soldiers must never sleep or rest on vehicle trails.

Sleep Deprivation

The human body can't function without sleep. Unfortunately, those of us in uniform often must perform extended missions with little rest. After all, how would it look for a Soldier to admit he can't keep up with his comrades because he's tired? Fatigue causes errors in judgment, slowing of the reflexes and a general dulling of the senses. A fatigued Soldier is at higher risk of making potentially deadly mistakes than a well-rested one.

Soldiers should get a minimum of four hours of continuous sleep every 24 hours. However, four hours of sleep per night isn't a routine anyone should keep for more than a week or two. An abbreviated sleep pattern can wear on the mind and body. As we all know, the general recommendation is roughly eight hours of sleep per night.

Conclusion

Whether you're on a peacekeeping or combat mission or on post at home, it's important to manage risks. Excluding combat losses, driving accidents kill the greatest majority of our Soldiers. Don't become a statistic — take care and drive safe!«





You've Got It, Ri



How many times have you been in the cockpit and heard, or said, these fateful words — "You've got it, right?" I admit I've been guilty of this infraction a few times. Most often, a flight can get away with these words because the activity at that time does not require immediate action. On the other hand, it's amazing how quickly things can get dangerous following those words, even in the close confines of an OH-58D(R) cockpit.

It was a cool autumn evening at Saber Army Heliport at Fort Campbell, Ky. This was just another night vision goggle readiness level-three progression flight with my usual instructor pilot (IP). I was flying right seat. We completed Task 1072, "Respond to engine failure at a hover," and moved on to Task 1074, "Respond to engine failure at cruise flight." It was dark with a thick bank of clouds moving in. This was our last task for the night. A light but steady rain had begun and we discussed calling it a night. The rain caused an unusual visual display in the ANVIS-6, but the IP and I had no cause for concern. We felt confident to continue with the training.

As I completed the maneuver by terminating with power, the IP explained what I needed to work on and then said, "Let's do one more and call it a night." Off we went. We turned on final and set ourselves up to enter the maneuver in accordance with Training Circular 1-248, Task 1074. Everything felt the same as the other maneuvers we had executed earlier this evening. When the IP announced, "Simulated engine failure," and retarded the throttle, I responded by lowering the collective to maintain RPM, accomplishing the required actions.

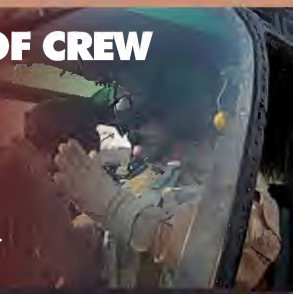
As we continued with the autorotation, I watched the windsock, which was my reference point to begin my deceleration. I listened

ght?

CHIEF WARRANT OFFICER 2 JULIAN JULES-MACQUET
7th Squadron, 17th Cavalry Regiment, 159th Combat Aviation Brigade
Fort Campbell, Ky.

THE ELEMENTS OF CREW COORDINATION

1. Communicate positively.
2. Direct assistance.
3. Announce actions.
4. Offer assistance.
5. Acknowledge actions.
6. Be explicit.
7. Provide aircraft control and obstacle advisories.
8. Coordinate action sequence and timing.



for the IP's usual dialogue prior to 400 feet above ground level (AGL), when he would open the throttle and verify engine power turbine speed (NP) RPM at 100 percent. I admit this had become background noise after doing the maneuver several times and I was slow to respond.

As I looked inside the aircraft, I noticed NP RPM was not at 100 percent when the IP announced, "I have flight controls." We had descended well below 400 feet AGL and the IP said, "Get ready." Well, he saved the day by executing a near-perfect Fort Rucker autorotation to the ground. I say "near perfect" because we hit hard and spread the skids. I had plenty of time to replay the whole episode over in my mind as we waited for the flight surgeon at the hospital for the old "pee-and-bleed" routine.

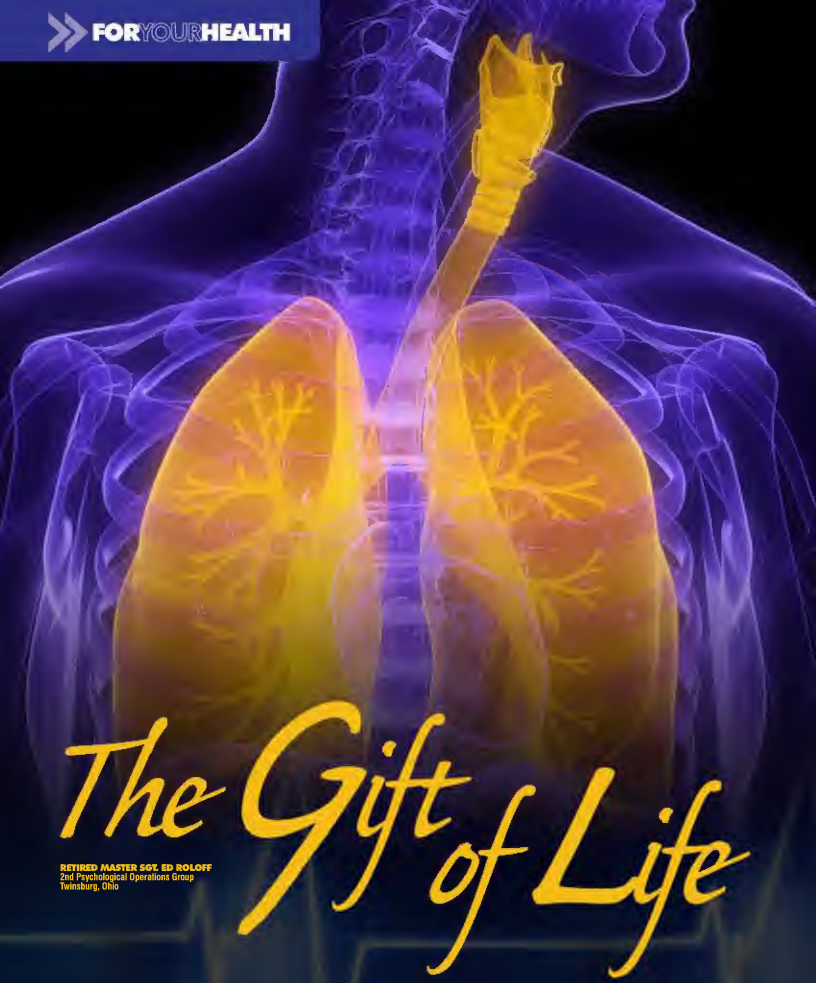
What Happened?

How had we managed to accomplish several successful autorotations prior to this bad one? In the investigation, I was told that I had failed in my crew coordination duties. It states in the aircrew training manual (ATM) that it is the IP's responsibility to apply throttle pressure with spring back and visually check that NP RPM is at 100 percent. However, the ATM also says provisions should be made in the crew brief for the pilot to verify the throttle is open. I assume I had failed to do this in all the previous maneuvers as well.

As stated in chapter six of the ATM, a significant number of accidents occur because one or more crew coordination errors occurred before or during the flight. Clearly, I had failed to offer assistance to the IP by verifying the throttle was open and NP RPM was at 100 percent.

I had also failed to acknowledge actions because I had fallen into a habit of paying lip service whenever an IP stated, "Throttle open." I had fallen into the new pilot trap of assuming the more experienced pilot had everything under control. The investigators pointed out that as a crew, we both failed to keep focused on the maneuver and became distracted by the deteriorating weather outside. I accept my role in the accident and clearly understand what I should have done to prevent it from happening.

In conclusion, the accident was a Class C. I fully understand crew coordination is vital to a successful flight. As a pilot in command (PC), I learned it's vital to apply all the elements of crew coordination to every flight, whether with a fellow PC or a 3,000-hour pilot. Moreover, you can rest assured I check operating RPM with throttle spring back and visually verify the NP RPM is at 100 percent every time I perform Task 1074.«



The Gift of Life

RETIRED MASTER SGT. ED ROLOFF
2nd Psychological Operations Group
Twinsburg, Ohio

On a snowy night in Hamburg, N.Y., a motorist driving a Ford F-150 struck the electrical pole in front of Dave Johnson's home, causing a power outage. Due to the foul weather and the late hour, the power company would not be able to repair service to the area for at least four to six hours. "No big deal," Dave thought. Like most Hamburg residents, he was accustomed to frequent power outages during the winter and owned a gas-powered generator.

Despite the manufacturer's warning, Dave set up and ran the generator inside his attached garage (with the garage door open). Early the next morning, when the power was restored, Dave walked out into the garage to turn off the generator. When he walked back into the house, he stumbled, fell, vomited and then passed out. Dave's wife, Lisa, came out of the bedroom to investigate the commotion and also stumbled and fell. She yelled for her oldest daughter, who called 911 when she found her parents on the floor. The entire family was transported to the local emergency room.

So what happened? Dave, Lisa and their two daughters were victims of carbon monoxide (CO) poisoning. An odorless, colorless gas that can cause sudden illness and death, CO is found in combustion fumes such as those produced by vehicles, small gasoline engines, stoves, lanterns, burning charcoal and wood, and gas ranges and heating systems. The CO from these sources can build up in enclosed or semi-enclosed spaces, poisoning the people and animals breathing it.

The most common symptoms of CO poisoning are headache, dizziness, weakness, nausea, vomiting, chest pain and confusion. High levels of CO ingestion can cause loss of consciousness and death. Since many of these symptoms are similar to those of the flu, food poisoning or other illnesses, some victims may not realize CO poisoning could be the cause of their problems.

CO poisoning is the result of CO invading the blood stream. Red blood cells absorb CO quicker than they absorb oxygen. If there is a high quantity of CO in the air, the body may replace the oxygen in the blood with CO. This blocks oxygen from getting into the body, which can damage tissues and result in death. People who are sleeping or intoxicated can die from CO poisoning before

DID YOU KNOW?

Carbon monoxide exposure accounts for an estimated 15,000 emergency room visits and 500 deaths in the United States each year.

Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention



ever experiencing symptoms.

If you experience any of the symptoms associated with CO poisoning, get fresh air immediately. Then go to an emergency room and tell the physician you suspect you're suffering from CO poisoning. If CO poisoning has occurred, it can often be diagnosed by a blood test done soon after exposure. The treatment for CO poisoning is high-dose oxygen, usually using a facemask attached to an oxygen reserve bag. In severe cases, a hyperbaric pressure chamber, if available, may be used to give even higher doses of oxygen.

There is nothing wrong with using a portable generator during an emergency, but it must be used wisely and in accordance with the manufacturer's specifications. When used in a confined space, generators can produce high levels of CO within minutes. Here are some safety tips for using a portable generator:

- Never use a generator inside homes, garages, crawlspaces, sheds or similar areas, even when using fans or opening doors and windows for ventilation.
- Follow the manufacturer's instructions that come with the generator.
- Locate the unit outdoors and far from doors, windows and vents that could allow CO to come indoors.
- Install battery-operated CO detectors/alarms or plug-in CO alarms with a battery back-up in your home, according to the manufacturer's instructions.

Some advice on CO detectors: Don't let buying one lull you into a false sense of security. Preventing CO from becoming a problem in your home is better than relying on an alarm. Also, do some research on the features of several different detectors and don't select solely on the basis of cost. Non-governmental organizations such as Consumers Union (publisher of Consumer Reports), the American Gas Association and Underwriters Laboratories can help you make an informed decision. It is important for you to know that the technology of CO detectors is still developing, there are several types on the market and they are not generally considered to be as reliable as the smoke detectors found in homes. Unlike a smoke detector, where you can easily confirm the cause of the alarm, CO is invisible and odorless, so it's harder to tell if an alarm is false or a real emergency.

After their CO scare, Dave and Lisa spent four days in the hospital receiving high-dose oxygen treatment inside a hyperbaric chamber. Their daughters were treated with high-dose oxygen through a facemask and discharged from the hospital after two days. Dave learned a valuable lesson on the dangers of CO poisoning, and he and his family received a very precious gift — life!

FYI

According to a study by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, January is the worst month for carbon monoxide poisoning.

gear UP!

FOR WARM FIRES



- Follow the directions on the package if using man-made logs. Never break the logs apart to quicken the fire.

- Never close the damper with hot ashes in the fireplace.

- Always use a sturdy screen when fireplaces are in use.

- Burn only wood. Paper or pine boughs can float out the chimney and ignite your roof or neighboring homes. Also, plastic, charcoal and Styrofoam can produce toxic gases!

- Make sure the fire is out before leaving the house or going to bed.

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FallWinter

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ARMY SAFE IS ARMY STRONG

3 BAND OF BROTHERS & SISTERS

STEPPING OUT



Look around the post where you're assigned. On any given day, you can see people walking, jogging or riding bicycles. On post, most of us use sidewalks, pedestrian crosswalks, bicycle paths and parking lots to get to our work areas, homes, recreational areas, training sites and shopping areas. In addition, some of us walk, run or bicycle for personal exercise. But did you know how great a threat pedestrians and bicycle riders face as they share the road with motorists? According to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, between 2000 and 2008, an average of more than 4,700 people died each year from being struck by motor vehicles.

These accidents are typically caused by negligence. Automobile drivers sometimes fail to observe traffic lights, stop or yield signs, marked pedestrian crossing lights or crosswalk paths. While bicyclists are sometimes ignored by motorists, some bicyclists make the problem worse by disregarding the traffic laws they are supposed obey. Pedestrians put themselves in danger by not waiting for the "WALK" signals to appear on pedestrian streetlight indicators before crossing busy roads or intersections. At bus stops and in busy parking lots, pedestrians sometimes raise their risk of being struck by weaving between parked and moving vehicles. Small children walking in parking lots can be too short to be seen by drivers as these youngsters make their way between vehicles or exit school buses.

Here are some tips to keep in mind about pedestrian safety.

Drivers

- Be aware of busy pedestrian crosswalk intersections and obey the traffic signals.
- Slow down in marked school zones and playground areas.
- Don't speed though parking lots because unattended small children and physically handicapped wheelchair operators may unexpectedly appear from behind vehicles.
- Look out for pedestrians at bus stop areas. Passengers



FOR SAFETY

CHARLES W. CURTIS JR.
Joint Munitions Command
Rock Island Arsenal
Rock Island, Ill.

may be crossing in front of or behind busses and not seen until the last moment.
- Stay alert for marching or running troop formations and obey designated road guards and crossing officials.

Bicyclists

- Obey posted speed limits and traffic regulations.
- If you share a bicycle lane with a vehicle roadway, stay in your lane and look out for vehicles as well as pedestrian traffic.
- If you share a sidewalk with pedestrians, stay in your lane and be sure to provide an audible signal when overtaking a pedestrian. Also, remember pedestrians have the right of way.
- Wear protective gear as required. Bicyclists on Army installations are required to wear helmets approved by the Consumer Product Safety Commission or certified by the American Society for Testing and Materials. Bicycles operated on Army posts during hours of darkness must have an operable headlight and taillight, and riders must wear a reflective upper outer garment.
- The wearing of headphones, earphones or other listening devices while bicycling on or adjacent to roadways on military installations is prohibited.
- Do not drink alcohol while riding a bicycle. If there is an accident and you are at fault, your riding privilege may be revoked.
- If you share the road with streetcars and automobiles, make sure you yield as required by local law. Normally, streetcars have the right of way.
- Look out for buses loading and unloading passengers and buses entering or exiting traffic lanes.

Pedestrians

- Always look for a designated crosswalk before crossing a road or highway.
- Make sure you cross only when the traffic light or pedestrian light indicates green or "WALK." Some crosswalk signal indicators have a raised hand symbol for "STOP" or the image of a person walking to indicate "GO."
- Stop at the road curb edge, corner or parked vehicle before proceeding to cross.
- Stop, look and listen. Check for traffic from both directions; first looking left and then right before crossing.
- Don't take traffic lights or pedestrian WALK signals for granted. Always check for oncoming traffic before stepping out.
- When crossing, continue to check for traffic from all directions. Look out while crossing corners where



motorists are allowed to turn right on a red light.

- Maintain situational awareness at all times. Look out for small children who may be unattended or depending on a crossing guard to safely cross the street.
- Watch where you're going and be alert for overhead falling object hazards when walking in construction areas.
- Watch for trip hazards caused by uneven pavement or foreign objects on sidewalks.
- Obey the regulations concerning headphone usage when on post. Army regulations prohibit wearing portable headphones, earphones or other listening devices while walking on or adjacent to roadways or roadway intersections.
- Runners should wear reflective vests, especially during hours of limited visibility, and stay only on authorized run routes at approved times.

The bottom line is situational awareness is vital for safety. Pedestrians and bicyclists must be aware of each other, vehicles and traffic flow. Vehicle drivers need to remain alert for pedestrian and bicycle traffic, heavy-use crossing areas and the unexpected hazard of a child or runner darting into oncoming traffic. Being alert while sharing the roads and walkways — whether we're driving, bicycling, walking or running — can help us all reach our destinations safely.

"**BEING ALERT** while sharing the **ROADS AND WALKWAYS** — whether we're **DRIVING, BICYCLING, WALKING OR RUNNING** — can help us all reach our **DESTINATIONS SAFELY.**"




Family strong!
Army Safe is Army Strong and that starts with a Soldier's Family. Have the information to help you and your Family stay SAFE.
Family engagement kit
https://safety.army.mil
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1 BAND O' BROTHERS & SISTERS

And The Award Go

SGT. MONICA K. SMITH
3rd Combat Aviation Brigade, Task Force Falcon
Bagram Airfield, Afghanistan

Editor's note: Knowledge will periodically spotlight Soldiers who were recently recognized for their outstanding airmanship with the Broken Wing Award.

As Chief Warrant Officer 2 Jacob Crause and Capt. Patrick DuBois, both with Troop C, Task Force Lighthorse, 3rd Combat Aviation Brigade, Task Force Falcon, positioned their OH-58D(R) to provide cover for another aircraft, they suddenly lost hydraulic pressure. Crause began executing emergency procedures, regaining stable level flight in a wider valley. While Dubois controlled the rate of decent, Crause controlled the direction of movement.

The pilots were able to maneuver the aircraft back toward the runway and notify the tactical operations center of the situation. However, as they neared the airfield, visibility decreased from five miles to a half mile due to smoke and haze. With the decreased visibility and remaining mountainous terrain before them, Crause remained at altitude to provide the best clearance. Fortunately, the two pilots were able to land the aircraft and shut down without further incident.

Crause, of Kent, Wash., and DuBois, of Colorado Springs, Colo., were recognized for their actions with the Broken Wing Award at Forward Operating Base Fenty. The award honors aircrew members who demonstrate a high degree of professional skill while recovering from an in-flight failure or malfunction requiring an emergency landing.

Crause said piloting the aircraft after the hydraulic pressure malfunction was like driving a HMMWV without power steering.

"In our particular case, it became apparent very early on that something else was not quite right with the flight controls," Crause said. "Moving the flight controls in one direction was about three times harder than moving them in the opposite direction. This is unusual and was not the case in a previous hydraulics failure I experienced during my tour in Iraq. I realized that without the help of my left seater, Dubois, I was going to have a very tough time getting the aircraft down in one piece."

Crause said the gravity of the situation really didn't hit him until after shutdown.

HOW TO NOMINATE

CHIEF WARRANT OFFICER 4 GREGORY GANZ
U.S. Army Combat Readiness/Safety Center
Fort Rucker, Ala.

The Army Aviation Broken Wing Award is highly regarded and reserved for aircrew members who successfully managed in-flight emergencies while operating aircraft under Army control. Since it was established in 1968, hundreds of aircrew members have received it based on their extraordinary airmanship. These aircrew members preserved lives and equipment, saving the U.S. Army millions of dollars.

Individuals performing authorized aircrew member flight duties on behalf of the Army while on a Department of Defense mission are eligible to receive the award. An aircrew member must, through outstanding airmanship, minimize or prevent aircraft damage or injury to personnel during an emergency situation. The aircrew member must have shown extraordinary skill while recovering an aircraft from an in-flight emergency situation. If more than one crewmember significantly contributed to the successful recovery from the emergency, each of those involved should be considered for nomination. Emergencies resulting from enemy action are not excluded from consideration.

...ES TO...





"The only time fear entered the equation was after we came to a complete stop and I realized what we had just done," he said. "We made a pretty smooth landing, skidding to a stop after about 50 feet. I can neither confirm nor deny that we may or may not have executed a high five in the cockpit after we came to a safe stop."

Lt. Col. Thomas von Eschenbach, commander of Task Force Lighthorse, praised Crause and Dubois for their actions.

"They were truly deserving of their Broken Wing Awards, as they kept calm under the pressure of an emergency situation by making great decisions and demonstrating great technical skill in flying their aircraft from the battlefield safely back to the airfield," he said. "Their determination and skill personifies what I call the 'Lighthorse Spirit' — a spirit that accepts every challenge and accomplishes every task assigned, making the most difficult look easy."

The awards were presented by Col. Don Galli, commander of Task Force Falcon.

"I'm very honored to have received this award," Crause said. "However, I hope this is my last opportunity to do so."

Nominations are evaluated by a panel consisting of five master aviators, of which a majority vote equals a selection or non-selection recommendation to the director of Army safety. The panel may include senior enlisted crewmembers when appropriate. At least one panel member will be qualified in the mission type and design of the aircraft involved in the emergency.

An emergency will not be considered for an award if:

- It was self-induced.
- It actually occurred during a simulated emergency requiring no added skill to land the aircraft successfully.
- It occurred because of noncompliance with published regulations or procedures.
- It was determined that no emergency actually existed.
- In the panel's opinion, a lack of discipline or aviator judgment may have induced the emergency.
- The aircraft was in a phase of flight with no unfavorable circumstances to prevent a safe landing.

The unit commander or installation or unit safety manager should initiate nominations for the Broken Wing Award. Normally, only one person will be nominated to receive the award for a single in-flight emergency. However, if more than one crewmember materially contributed to successful recovery from the emergency, all those involved should be considered for nomination. Details on eligibility and nomination procedures of the award can be found in Department of Army Pamphlet 385-10, 6-3(f).

Nominations will be forwarded through the first O-6 in the chain of command to the U.S. Army Combat Readiness/Safety Center, ATTN: CSSC-PT (Broken Wing Award), Fort Rucker, AL 36362-5363.

To contact the Broken Wing Award manager, e-mail safe.awards@conus.army.mil, or call (334) 255-9337 or DSN 558-9337. For more information, go to https://safety.army.mil/awardsprogram.

LOST

AVIATION

CH-47D



CLASS B

- An OH-58D(R) aircraft was damaged during sling-loading by a CH-47D. The OH-58D(R) was in a nose-high attitude during liftoff, with the tail boom still resting on the ground. As the crew attempted to reposition the OH-58D(R) on the ground, the tail boom sustained extensive damage.

MH-47G



CLASS C

- The aircraft experienced an overtorque/overtemp condition during aerial refueling.

UH-60A



CLASS B

- The aircraft made contact with a parked aircraft as the crew was repositioning to parking.

CLASS C

- The aircraft sustained damage when the main rotor blades contacted the tail boom section, tearing off the tail rotor driveshaft cover, damaging the intermediate tail rotor gearbox and the tail boom.

UH-60L



CLASS A

- Five Army crewmembers and four passengers were killed when their aircraft crashed en route to a designated landing zone. The aircraft was destroyed.

CLASS B

- The aircraft landed hard in dust conditions.

CLASS C

- Following takeoff, the aircraft struck power lines during nap-of-the-earth flight. The crew was aware of the obstacle and was negotiating it at the time of contact.

EO-5C



CLASS C

- A contract maintenance crew discovered damage to the aircraft during engine run-up for replacement. A washer left inside the safety screen damaged the compressor blades, inlet-housing and safety screen.

UAS

RQ-7B



CLASS B

- The unmanned aircraft (UA) lost link with the controlling stations and the operator lost control, resulting in a crash landing.

- The UA experienced engine failure following launch. The recovery chute deployed, but the UA struck a power pole during descent and was destroyed.

- The UA experienced an overtemp during normal flight, entered an uncommanded descent and crashed.



CLASS C

- The UA experienced a spike in engine operating temperature during flight. During landing, the system bounced and became airborne again, causing the landing hook to miss the pendants and catch the landing net. The UA broke through the net and crashed near the runway.

- The UA experienced decay in engine RPM followed by engine, generator and alternator failure during the landing phase and crashed. The crew recovered the UA with damage.



Editor's note: Information published in the accident briefs section is based on preliminary loss reports submitted by units and is subject to change. For more information on selected accident briefs, e-mail safe.knowledge@conus.army.mil.

GROUND

AMV



CLASS A

- A Soldier was killed and two others were injured when their M1151 HMMWV overturned during a four-vehicle convoy. During the rollover, the driver's door opened and the driver was pinned underneath the vehicle. He died at the scene.
- A Department of the Army Civilian was killed when the government-owned pickup truck he was driving to a range site overturned on an unimproved road. He was not wearing a seat belt.

CLASS B

- An M119 howitzer was being towed by a HMMWV when it separated from its trailer and was damaged. The howitzer was reported as a total loss.

Explosive/Fire



- Several homes were destroyed when ball ammunition fired from a .50-caliber machine gun started a brush fire. The fire department attempted to extinguish the flames, but the fire spread outside of the camp to the homes.

DRIVING

POV



CLASS A

- A Soldier died when his vehicle crossed the highway centerline and collided head-on with an tractor-trailer.
- An unbelted Soldier was thrown from his vehicle and killed when his car went out of control and overturned.
- While attempting to make a U-turn, a Soldier was struck and killed by a pickup truck hauling a trailer.
- Two Soldiers died when they were rear-ended by another vehicle on the highway shoulder, lost control, traveled beneath an overpass and struck a bridge.

POM



CLASS A

- A Soldier was killed when he went off the road to avoid either an animal or an object and struck a tree. The Soldier was wearing his full personal protective equipment (PPE) and was a licensed, trained and experienced rider.
- A Soldier died from head injuries after he was thrown into a guardrail when his bike drifted onto a road shoulder, hit a rumble strip and went out of control.
- A Soldier died after he lost control of his motorcycle in a curve and was thrown 72 feet into a power pole guyline. The Soldier was not wearing any PPE.
- A Soldier died when he lost control of his speeding motorcycle and was thrown into the path of an oncoming tractor-trailer.
- A Soldier was killed when he lost control of his motorcycle, left the road and struck a mailbox. At the time of the accident, the Soldier was within 50 feet of his home.
- A Soldier was speeding in a construction zone when he struck a concrete barrier and was thrown into the path of an oncoming tractor-trailer.

FISCAL 2011

POV/POM Class A/Fatalities as of Dec. 5, 2010

CAR	4/4
SUV/JEEP	1/1
TRUCK	2/2
MOTORCYCLE	7/7
PEDESTRIAN	0/0
OTHER*	0/0

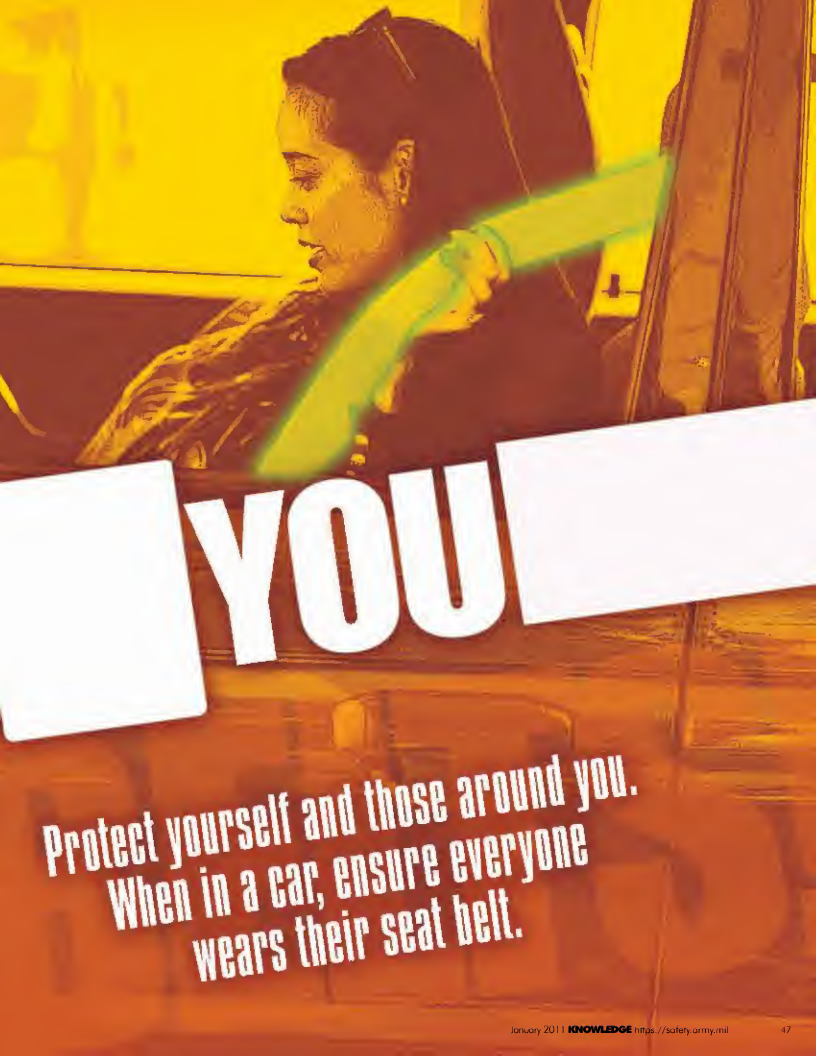
*Includes vans and ATVs

TOTAL 14/14

Fiscal Year 2010: 20 Three Year Average: 20




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CLICK IT OR TICKET


YOU
Protect yourself and those around you.
When in a car, ensure everyone
wears their seat belt.


FACT: Army motor and combat vehicle accidents are the single greatest cause of on-duty accidental ground fatalities among our Soldiers.
Get the tools before the road gets slick.
Driver's Training Toolbox
https://safety.army.mil/drivertrainingtoolbox/
U.S. ARMY
ARMY STRONG.
U.S. ARMY COMBAT READINESS/SAFETY CENTER
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